

APR -2 1924

Washington, D. C.

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True as Steel - 7 reels

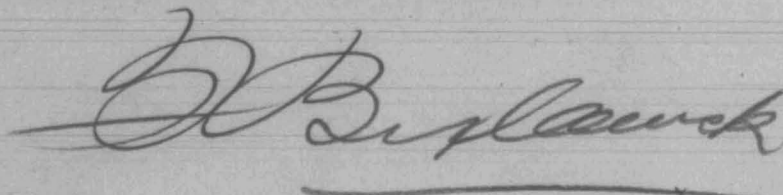
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hereby acknowledges the delivery to him of said copies, and
the receipt thereof.



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/ TRUE AS STEEL /
Photoplay in /seven reels /
/ Written and directed by Rupert Hughes /
Author of the Photoplay (under section 62)
Goldwyn Pictures Corporation of the U.S.

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TRUE AS STEEL

by

Rupert Hughes

(Copyright synopsis)

Jazz! A ballroom crowded to capacity with feverish, straining couples, young, old, joyous, jaded.....wary feet, gliding, tripping, stumbling, aching.

In a country club near Toledo, and elsewhere in the very United States, they call this "Pleasure."

Frank Farry has grown rich and keeps young manufacturing "The Tire That Never Tires." He is dancing with his wife, whom he loves, but his pace is a little too fast for her. Wilted and protesting, she begs him to stop but he is enjoying himself and glides gayly on.

Their daughter Ethel likes men at their "prime." She is dancing in the arms of elderly Jake Leighton the banker, who, though he has lost his youth, takes it where he finds it. It is apparent Jake is her slave---slave to her beauty and youth. Disgustingly apparent to young Gilbert Morse, glowering savagely at them from behind a pillar. He loves Ethel but does not share her enthusiasm for the middle ages. He tries to cut in on their dance, and, unsuccessful, returns to his observation-post to nurse his grievance.

Two butlers watch the antics of the dancers. "Do they call this a dance or a free-for-all? asks one. A woman, winded

by a blow from a pair of gymnastic dancers, staggers from the floor. "Wow, what a wallop!" admires the other butler. "I think I'll bring me wife to the next dance."

Frank Parry finds an unoccupied divan. His wife, a gentle, matronly soul, sinks upon it with a sigh of relief. Parry sits beside her for a moment. A young girl leans over and pats his cheek familiarly. Parry is handsome and distinguished, a favorite with the ladies. After a startled moment, Mrs. Parry conquers a mild resentment and smiles at the girl. Another minute and the inexhaustible Parry is up and surveying the field. The music has gone to his feet. He cuts in on a young couple and carries off the girl. "Dance off to the edge," she suggests, "and I'll teach you a new step." They do so and after a stumble or two Parry masters it. Mrs. Parry, watching them, wipes away a wistful tear.

When the music stops, Parry returns to his wife. He must catch the midnight train for New York where he has an important business engagement. Mrs. Parry finds Ethel at the punch-bowl with Jake. "Why are you so mean to Gilbert," she whispers reproachfully, "and so nice to that old he-vamp?" "Oh, these young cubs have no conversation," replies Ethel lightly. "Old Jake Leighton talks to me as if I were his mother." Jake can not remove his mooning old eyes from the girl.

Gilbert Morse pursues Parry and the two women to the door. "You're going to stay and dance with me," he commands Ethel, "and if old Jake Leighton cuts in I'll cut his throat." Parry is amused. "May I cut in for a goodbye kiss?" he asks politely, and kisses his daughter. Gilbert and Ethel return to the ballroom. This time

Jake tries to cut in---at some peril to his prominent nose.

On the way to the station in their limousine, Mrs. Parry nestles in her husband's arm. Later, in his Pullman berth, Parry examines a book of sample fabrics, switches off the light and falls asleep.

At the Parry home, Mrs. Parry finds Ethel reading a popular magazine in bed. Ethel indicates the picture of a dark-eyed woman. "That's the new manager of the office Daddy is going to deal with in New York," she remarks. "A woman, and horribly handsome!"

Under the picture is the following:

Women who earn \$50,000 a year or more.

Mrs. Eva Boutelle, the new manager of the New York office of the Swansea Cotton Mills.

Mrs. Boutelle was a fashionable butterfly until her husband fell into financial difficulties. The old-fashioned woman would have folded her hands in despair and suffered poverty bravely but stupidly as a virtuous parasite, but Mrs. Boutelle went bravely forth, visited bankers, pleaded for credit, secured loans and put her husband on his feet. Since then she has gone forward in a brilliant career.

Ethel is filled with admiration. "Mrs. Boutelle earns \$50,000 a year," she says. "I wish I could earn something!" Mrs. Parry replies sadly, "Mrs. Boutelle saved her husband, but when your father failed in business once I did nothing to help him." Ethel is indignant. "Why," she says, "Daddy has often told me how you dismissed the servants, skimped and scraped, made my clothes, did everything!" "Oh, I did the negative things," admits her mother, "but I didn't go out into the world and fight for him or with him." "But that wouldn't have been respectable in your day," protests Ethel. Tears of pain fill Mrs. Parry's eyes. "It isn't much to

accomplish in life, just being respectable."

To Mrs. Boutelle, as to many others, the business life is getting to the desk on time.

In the Boutelle bedroom, Mrs. Boutelle, dressed for snatches a hasty breakfast. Harry, her husband, has his luxurion in bed. He believes that even if women must work, men must sleep. "If I didn't have to take that infernal train to Chicago, darling," he confides, "I never would get up!" On the dressing-table is a ticket reservation for the opera. "Since you can't go with me tonight," says his wife, "I'll have to ask some woman friend." "See that it's a woman!" warns Harry humorously. She smiles cryptically. Harry rises obediently to help her into her wrap, and embraces her. "You poor, brave, wonderful creature!" he commiserates. "I suppose every man you meet tries to flirt with you." "Don't judge all men by yourself, my beautiful butterfly," she retorts brightly, and throws him a kiss from the floor.

New York is panorama....Manhattan...Brooklyn Bridge... the jutting outline of skyscrapers.....Wall Street.

In her private office, Mrs. Boutelle is at her desk dictating the morning mail. She is a heroine even to her secretary.

Commodore Fairfield, president of the company, is thinking more of his yacht cruise than of his business. The Trident Yacht Club leaves today on its annual cruise of a week, and he is in command of the fleet. He is giving last-minute instructions to his secretary-- and a cheerful boss makes a sad secretary. Parry is announced. The Commodore greets him jovially and offers him a drink from a well-

stocked cellarette in his desk. Parry refuses smilingly, explaining, "I need a clear head when I place an order with your firm. The Commodore sends for Mrs. Boutelle. "Can't you give me a man to deal with?" asks Parry hastily, "I hate these hard-boiled, square-jawed business women." As he speaks, Mrs. Boutelle enters. Parry's eyes widen with surprise and admiration. The Commodore introduces them, adding, "She knows more about the business than I do." Mrs. Boutelle has caught the gleam in Parry's eyes and is very business-like. Parry pauses at her door to let her enter first but she brusquely brushes him in and closes the door after them. Seating herself at her desk, she offers him a cigar and lights it for him. Parry does not remove his eyes from hers. She returns his gaze for a long, quizzical moment and smiles slightly. Glancing down, he sees a drawer stocked with liquor.

Mrs. Boutelle takes up his order and very efficiently goes into the matter at hand.....intricate figures concerning karded cotton yarn for tread fabric, cord fabric, etc. etc. Parry draws his chair close; quite close.

Harry Boutelle, meanwhile, is speeding toward Chicago. He is on the observation platform of the train, trying to get interested in a magazine. A smirking little old lady tries to interest him in the scenery, but gives up and leaves in disgust. A pretty girl takes her seat and lays an appealing hand on his arm. Annoyed, Harry turns away but a glance reveals a more interesting companion. The trip loses its boredom.....

After a long conference with Parry, Mrs. Boutelle rises. "Nobody can compete with our rates or our quality," she says in con-

clusion. Have you seen our plant?" She indicates a picture of the Swansea Cotton Mills---"The largest in the world." She holds up for examination a large spool of cotton fibre---but Parry is gazing down the well of the building with its three walls of windows at which busy workers may be seen. At one window, an employee is putting his arm about his stenographer. She pushes him away smartly.

"It's like a monstrous bee-hive, isn't it?" asks Mrs. Boutelle. "All filled with toil!" "And honey," smiles Parry. At a window nearby a doctor is kissing his nurse. At another, a man is kissing his secretary. Discovered, they draw down the shade sharply. Parry experimentally slips his arm about Mrs. Boutelle and kisses her cheek. She breaks from him, brushing the kiss away with her hand and exclaiming, "Oh, but you Toledo men are swift!" Parry retorts: "That's because you New York women are so enticing." He pursues her and after a struggle gets possession of her hands. "You are strong, aren't you?" murmurs Mrs. Boutelle. Quickly turning her face away, she avoids the kiss which falls on her hair. She escapes to the door leading to her secretary's office. Parry raises his hands in surrender.

Mrs. Boutelle returns to her desk. "Forgive me!" pleads Parry. "You have only done your duty," she replies, adding, as he shows his surprise, "Doesn't the average man feel it his duty to challenge every woman he meets to a wrestling match?" Somewhat shamefaced, Parry looks about for his hat. Mrs. Boutelle thinks quickly. She is letting a big customer get away. It is good conduct, but bad business. She takes the opera tickets from her purse and indicates they might go together. "On one condition," says Parry,

hope revived, "that you dine with me." She agrees and gives him her apartment address so that he may call for her.

Seated at a table in a fashionable cafe that night, Parry asks Mrs. Boutelle if she enjoys dancing. "Yes," she replies, "but I don't dance well." "Neither do I," says Parry. They go out on the dance floor and in a moment are in complete rhythm with the music-- and each other. "Liar!" smiles Mrs. Boutelle. "Liarress!" returns Parry. As they return to their table, he compliments her dancing. "Who wouldn't dance wonderfully with you!" she replies. She indicates a nearby table, whose occupants are surreptitiously enjoying liquor. "See those three more or less respectable married couples? As soon as the music starts they will exchange wives and husbands. As soon as the music stops, they'll return to respectability. Curious, eh?"

They return to the dance-floor, As they dance, the scene about them dissolves. They are dancing alone in a starry sky with no thought save of each other. They return to earth as the music stops. Back again at their table, they remember the opera tickets. Glancing at Mrs. Boutelle for permission, Parry tears them up. A cabaret girl dangles a stuffed monkey on a string from a balcony over them. The dancers try to snatch it. Parry captures it for Mrs. Boutelle.

Love makes monkeys of us all.

They leave the cafe and enter a taxi. Mrs. Boutelle yawns prettily; he head droops to Parry's shoulder, but she catches herself in time.

Meanwhile, at home, Mrs. Parry stirs in her sleep. Her arm falls on the empty place at her side.....

In the morning, Mrs. Parry enters Ethel's room. She is dressed for shopping and has a shopping list:

Turkey
Cranberries
Turnips
Father's clothes to cleaner
Present for Aunt Kate

Ethel reads it and cries in disgust, "Turkey! Cranberries! Papa's pants to the tailor! Of all indoor sports housekeeping is the stupidest!----I'm pretty well fed up on this domestic stuff. I warn you!" It is evident Ethel does not intend to become a humdrum housewife like her mother.

Again in business conference with Mrs. Boutelle in her office, Parry agrees to the most exorbitant prices just to be gallant. She coldly rebuffs his attempts to make love. "Perhaps," she suggests, "you would rather take up your contracts with one of the men on our staff?" Parry apologizes and tries, without much success, to match her business-like exterior. Her secretary enters with a telegram:

Chicago affairs in a mess. Can you deposit a thousand dollars in my bank till first of month. Very urgent darling. Thanks immensely. Much love.

Harry

Mrs. Boutelle immediately writes a check and instructs her secretary to deposit it in her husband's bank. Parry listens with silent comprehension. "Your husband," he asks when they are alone, "do you--do you love him?" She replies that she does. "Are you true to him?" asks Parry. "As true as steel!" she says proudly, adding significant-

ly, "Steel bends." She continues: "In ancient Toledo--not Ohio but Spain--they made a steel blade that bent double. I had a great-grandfather who had a Toledo blade in a sword-cane. It saved his life more than once."-----

The scene dissolves to the interior of an old Spanish house. A young Spanish dandy takes his cane from a servant, draws the sword from his cane and tests it by bending the thin, fine blade into a circle. Replacing it, he emerges jauntily on the street. A thug, knife drawn, lies in wait and attacks him----but in a trice he has drawn his sword and run him through. He thrusts the blade back into the cane and continues coolly down the street.

"I'm Toledo-true," concludes Mrs. Boutelle. "Everybody bends. The important thing is not to break." She flashes him a smile and he bends swiftly and kisses her hand.

Parry sends a telegram to his wife and Ethel:

Unexpected delay in closing deal with cotton mills
will keep me here longer than I expected. Dearest
love to you both.

Frank Parry

Mrs. Parry comes upon Ethel lying in exhausted sleep on the window seat in her room. Beside her is a note-book filled with short-hand notes. Secretly, Ethel is taking a secretarial course and is having a desperate time conquering pothooks and her typewriter.

Days and nights flee in the mingling of business, dances, theaters, moonlight drives.....until one day Parry enters a jewelry store. "Wife with you?" asks the inquisitive clerk. "Buying something for her?" "Well - er - what have you got?" stammers Parry. The clerk shows him a diamond bar-pin. "That's a little old, isn't it?"

fusses Parry, "rather sedate?" The clerk steals a knowing glance at him and produces an exquisite bracelet of diamond strands. Parry's glance falls on the price-tag. "Is this the price," he demands, "or the population of New York?" But he buys the bracelet.

Commodore Fairfield returns from his cruise. "Parry still here?" he asks Mrs. Boutelle. She nods Yes. Something in her embarrassed manner strikes him as unusual. He smiles understandingly. "Is that because you haven't landed him---or because you have?" He pats her cheek with a fatherly hand. "As bad as that, eh?" He leaves, encountering Parry and urging him into Mrs. Boutelle's office. Parry sits close beside her and when she is reaching for her pencil captures her hand. With the smoking of two cigars, the contracts are ready to be typed and Mrs. Boutelle delivers them to her secretary. She remarks she is sorry to keep her so late. It is already past closing time. The secretary switches on the light---the office has grown quite dark---and draws the shades. She returns shortly with the contracts and Parry signs them.

Commodore Fairfield stuffs his pockets with cigars and his flask and leaves his office for the night.

The contracts negotiated, Parry beckons Mrs. Boutelle to the window seat in her office. He is about to kiss her left hand when he notices her wedding ring, and kisses the right instead. He produces the bracelet. "It will make somebody very happy," says Mrs. Boutelle admiringly. She refuses to take it. Disappointed, Parry returns it to his pocket. From an opposite office window an amused girl and man see Parry, in silhouette, take Mrs. Boutelle in passionate embrace and kiss her.

Losing all restraint, Parry kisses her again and again. Weak with emotion, Mrs. Boutelle whispers in prayer: "Help me-- help me! I want to be good, but I can't save both of us! Help me!" They sink to the window seat and are drawn into another involuntary embrace.

In the outer office, the faithful secretary sleeps, her head on the typewriter keys.

Harry Boutelle, meanwhile, returns from his Chicago trip and is about to rush into his wife's private office when her secretary ---awake now---stops him. "An important conference," she explains, "a big contract." Very impatient, Harry takes a chair in the outer office.

Mrs. Boutelle and Parry are still beside the window. She peers down to the pavement, far beneath. "My soul is as guilty as if---I ought to throw myself down there!" she exclaims. "But you do love me, don't you?--truly?" protests Parry. "No!" she declares. "Insane as I have been, I love only my husband." "Divorce him and marry me!" insists Parry. Mrs. Boutelle has a quick vision of her great-grandfather bending double his steel blade. "Divorce Harry?" she exclaims. "No, no. He needs me. I know it." "Wouldn't it be only honest for me to offer my wife her freedom?" asks Parry. "But does she want her freedom?" argues Mrs. Boutelle. "She has some rights, hasn't she? And, in your heart, you love her. You know you do.----What fools we've been! We have no rights now--only responsibilities!----I'm not going to let a brief madness wreck my whole life--or yours--or my husband's!" They are interrupted by the entry of the secretary who announces Harry Boutelle's arrival. Harry

shakes hands with Parry. The latter shakes hands formally with Mrs. Boutelle and bids her goodbye. There is pain in the parting for them both, but they do not show it. Only the sympathetic secretary senses it.

"Well, honey," says Harry kissing his wife, "I'm ruined again unless you can stir up some cash." "I've just made a big commission," she replies. "You're welcome to it, of course. But it's not half enough." "You raised money before," reminds Harry. "You can't let me sink this time!" Mrs. Boutelle lays her head wearily on the desk. Harry kisses her hair but she brushes his arm from her shoulders, as she can not bear him to touch her.

When Parry reaches home his wife is out shopping. Nor is Ethel at home. "Miss Ethel don't get home till all hours from the office," the maid informs me, and then says hastily, "Oh, Lord, I wasn't supposed to tell that!" In Ethel's room, Parry finds a typewriter and a shorthand pad. On the dresser is his own photograph with the scrawl, "To Ethel from her old Dad." In the mirror above is the magazine photograph of Mrs. Boutelle, with "My new ideal" written across it in Ethel's hand. Pinned about the mirror are various business engagement slips with real-estate "prospects." Ethel arrives and breathlessly announces, "I'm a business man, too. I'm a realtor!" "But an office is no place for a young woman like you," says her father, displeased. "I know it," retorts Ethel, "and you know it. But we mustn't tell mamma.---I'll not be a parasite on the man I marry. Some day I may save him as Mrs. Boutelle---" Parry is startled, and under Ethel's keen, wise, young eyes flushes guiltily. They hear Mrs. Parry's foot on the stairs, and Ethel flashes a quick look at her father---"I won't tell!"

"This daughter of ours in an office!" says Mrs. Parry, when her husband has embraced her. "Is it safe for women?" "Is any place safe for women?" remarks Parry, "or men?" "But," says Mrs. Parry, "being away from home all day with men on an equal plane---doesn't it destroy something precious?" "It all depends on the woman," answers Parry. His manner is strange; as if the subject were a distasteful one. His wife looks at him curiously. "This new ideal of Ethel's, this Mrs. Boutelle---what's she like" she asks. "What's she like?" repeats Parry impatiently, "She's like any other woman, I suppose. How do I know what she's like?" Still that curious look of dawning understanding in Mrs. Parry's eyes. "The president turned me over to her," continues Parry to her unspoken question. "These women in business, they're everywhere!---you can't escape them!" He raises his eyes and meets those of his wife, regarding him with something like fright. "What are you accusing me of," he blurts, "an affair with her?" "Why," exclaims Mrs. Parry, "I haven't accused you of anything!" But the intuition with which a woman reads the man she loves has told her what has happened. Her eyes fill with tears of anguish. Mechanically, she begins to unpack his suitcase. She picks up the jewelry box, opens it and sees the gleaming bracelet. It looks incongruous on her matronly wrist. She knows it, though Parry wants her to believe it is for her. "This was meant for somebody who is what I was once, young and beautiful." Tragic with sorrow, she leans against the bed for support. "You are more beautiful than ever!" cries Parry penitently, "And I love you more!" She hands him the bracelet and he flings it, in helpless rage and disgust, on the floor. As he paces the floor, he kicks it from him viciously.

Ethel enters on this scene. She is dressed for her dinner engagement. The bracelet catches her eye and, delighted, she picks it up. "This was just born for a young business woman," she declares. "It will dazzle old Jake Leighton into buying a dozen lots.---You business men do your best work at a luncheon table. We business women work best at a dance." Parry regards her sternly. "I forbid you to go!" "Oh, daddy," reproves Ethel impatiently, "don't talk like a costume picture." She breaks from his hold with the bracelet on her arm.

Parry and his wife face each other over their lonely dinner table. They avoid each other's eyes. Parry crosses to her side and draws her close. "Mary, I can't bear to have my punishment fall on you! Forgive me," he pleads, "and take me back into your heart!" The servant enters to serve them. They dismiss him and Mary takes Parry in forgiving embrace.

At the country club, Ethel again dances with Jake Leighton. Gilbert Morse watches them, burning with jealousy and disgust. Gilbert's table is next to Jake Leighton's. His chair and Ethel's are back-to-back. Ethel surreptitiously reaches back and grasps Gilbert's hand. "I've sold Jake a couple of lots already," she whispers jubilantly. Gilbert's eyes fall on the bracelet on her wrist. Startled anger is in his eyes. He thrusts her hand from him. Reading his thought, Ethel whispers frantically, "Daddy gave it to me! Daddy gave it to me!" Reassured, Gilbert smiles, reaches for her hand and kisses it.

In the Boutelle dining room, Harry gazes across the table at his beautiful wife with boyish adoration. "You're the bravest

and best wife that ever lived!" he says, "Sharp as steel--and as true!" She shakes her head lightly, and clasps his hand over the table.

Alice D. G. Miller
2.15.24

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